promoting

Dignity and Equality for all

SASKATCHEWAN

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

— 1999-2000 —

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code

> *"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights..."*
>
> —Article 1
> Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Legislative Assembly unanimously passed *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* in 1979. The *Code* sets out the fundamental freedoms and equality rights of all members of the human family and prohibits the infringement of those rights in important areas of public life.

Part I of the *Code* protects the right to freedom of conscience, religion, expression, and association; the right to vote in provincial elections; and the right to freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention.

Part II of the *Code* prohibits discriminatory policies and practices in employment, education, public services, housing, contracts, publications, professional associations and trade unions. It is illegal to discriminate in these areas on the basis of:

- age (18-64)
- ancestry, race or colour
- family status
- marital status
- nationality or place of origin
- physical or mental disability
- receipt of public assistance
- religion or creed
- sex (covers sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination)
- sexual orientation

The *Code* empowers the Commission to approve special programs designed to prevent, eliminate or reduce disadvantages suffered by groups of individuals because of a prohibited ground of discrimination. To date, the Commission has approved equity programs for four groups: women, Aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.

The *Code* also requires the Commission to conduct research and public education designed to eliminate discrimination and further the principles of individual equality and cultural diversity.

Upon application, the Commission or the Director may grant exemptions from the *Code* where this is necessary and advisable.

Commission staff units work together to fulfill the Commission's mandate. The investigation and legal units are primarily responsible for processing human rights complaints. The public and special programs unit is responsible for exemptions, equity programs, communications and public education.

101-00897/

October, 2000

The Honourable Chris Axworthy, Q.C.
Minister of Justice
Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

Dear Minister Axworthy:

In accordance with section 49 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*, it is my privilege to submit to you the 1999-2000 Annual Report of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

This report reflects the activities of the Commission from April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000.

Sincerely,

Donna Scott

Donna C. Scott
Chief Commissioner and Director

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Chief Commissioner's Message

The new millennium has been the subject of much discussion and speculation. It has been viewed as an opportunity to reflect upon the achievements and milestones of the past, while looking forward with anticipation to the many possibilities for the future.

For those of us concerned with human rights, there is a temptation to engage in similar reflection and anticipation at this time. To do so requires us to examine the emerging trends and persistent forces that were evident during the past year—the relationship between poverty and inequality; the ongoing scourge of racism in our communities; the disparity between our international obligations and our actions; and the continuing advancement and evolution of human rights principles in the courts.

Poverty is increasingly recognized as a matter of concern for human rights agencies. The poor are marginalized in our society and are subject to widespread systemic discrimination through the denial of housing and other services. Poor Canadians live with negative stereotypes, social stigma and routinely experience prejudice, not unlike other disadvantaged groups currently protected by human rights legislation. Differences in social and economic status are as much a source of inequality as ancestry, gender and disability.

There is growing support for human rights protections for the poor. In December 1998, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments expressly incorporate protection of economic and social rights in human rights legislation. In June 1998, the Senate, through the introduction of Bill S-11, demonstrated its support for including social condition as a protected ground. And this year, CASHRA (Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies) adopted a resolution urging all levels of government to confirm their commitment to Canada's international obligations by taking action to protect against discrimination faced by poor Canadians.

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code currently protects individuals from discrimination on the ground of "receipt of public assistance". While this may be seen as a step in the right direction, the Commission considers this ground to be too narrow to address discrimination experienced by the working poor or individuals in receipt of public assistance other than social assistance. The Commission adds its voice to the UN Committee, the Senate and CASHRA, in recommending the inclusion of social condition in human rights legislation.

A second disturbing force is the pervasive and widespread racism that continues against Aboriginal people and people of colour in our province. Racism is persistent, often subtle and is deeply embedded in all levels of our society. Recent events involving the Saskatoon Police Service are an indicator of the deep divisions between our institutions and the Aboriginal community and reflect at least the perception that systemic racism exists within our most respected institutions. Members of visible minorities report discrimination in employment, particularly within the public sector. Disadvantages arising from poverty and race are closely linked.

According to the 1996 Census, the Aboriginal population is approximately 12% of Saskatchewan's total population, and it is expected to reach 17% by 2016. Currently, it is estimated that slightly more than half of the Aboriginal population is under 20 years of age. Given these demographic trends, it is essential that there be a strategic response to racism and discrimination against Aboriginal peoples.

The Commission approaches racism in a number of ways—the complaint system, public education and equity programs. However, these strategies are clearly not enough. What is urgently needed in our province is public dialogue on the issue of racism. A forum is needed to allow the people of Saskatchewan an opportunity to tell their stories and voice their concerns about racism.

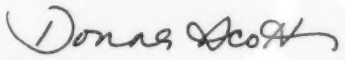
On a different note, 1999 marked the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Commemoration of the anniversary drew attention to the need to fully meet our international obligations concerning youth. For example, human rights legislation in our province still does not protect young people from discrimination based upon their age. Young people under 18 have no protection from discrimination in employment, service or any other area covered by the *Code* if this discrimination is based on age.

In the Commission's 1996 report *Renewing the Vision*, the Commission recommended the repeal of the restrictive definition of age in the *Code*. Our limited protection for age discrimination is inconsistent with the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* which prohibits age discrimination without defining age in a limiting way. Repeal of the age restrictions in the *Code* would benefit older people, who also experience discrimination because of their age. For instance,

people who are denied jobs because they are age 65 or older have no recourse to the *Code*. It would be timely for our legislators to consider repealing the restrictive definition of age within the *Code*.

Finally, this year's decisions from the Supreme Court of Canada will provide the Commission with additional tools to fight discrimination in the workplace. The *Meiorin* decision represents a significant advancement for human rights in Canada. In a unanimous decision, the Supreme Court held that a fitness test required by Ms. Meiorin's employer discriminated against women because women do not have the same physical abilities as men. The Court clarified the law with respect to discrimination in employment. The decision requires an employer to accommodate individual differences to the point of undue hardship in every case. In the subsequent *Grismer* decision, the Supreme Court made it clear that the obligation to accommodate individual differences established in *Meiorin* also applies to the provision of services. As Madam Justice Beverley McLachlin stated in *Meiorin*, "the essence of equality is to be treated according to one's own merit, capabilities and circumstances."

It is clear that many vulnerable people in our province continue to be exposed to exclusion and discrimination. While developments in the law serve to assist the Commission in doing its work, it is the challenge for all members of our community and government to work together to create a more just and inclusive society—one free from prejudice, that offers equality of benefit to all people.



Donna C. Scott
Chief Commissioner and Director

Mission Statement and Goals

Mission Statement

We promote and protect individual dignity, fundamental freedoms and equal rights of all members of the human family.

Goals

The Commission's goals, derived from *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*, are to:

- Discourage and eliminate discrimination
- Investigate and resolve discrimination complaints quickly and effectively
- Support, and seek remedies for, individuals and groups who suffer discrimination
- Promote, approve and monitor employment and education equity programs
- Carry out and promote research and education strategies to advance the principles of equality and diversity and encourage understanding of human rights issues
- Provide leadership on human rights-related public policy development and implementation
- Promote advances in human rights legislation and protection

Highlights

Tenth Anniversary of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child

1999 was the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the *U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child*. To mark the anniversary, the Commissioners and staff participated in and attended several events throughout the year.

Together with the Saskatoon chapter of Amnesty International, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission organized the December 10 commemorative candlelight march, held to recognize International Human Rights Day. This year the procession and after dinner address by Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Dr. Deborah Parker-Loewen highlighted both Human Rights Day and the 10th anniversary of *The Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

As part of the ongoing commemoration of the 10th anniversary, the Chief Commissioner chaired a panel discussion, "Children's Rights in Saskatchewan: How Do We Measure Up?" as part of the Amnesty International Week in October.

Commission staff and Commissioners attended a National Child Day event on November 17, hosted by the Children's Advocate for Saskatchewan and the Provincial Youth Delegation to commemorate the anniversary. The celebration included a walk from the Regina YWCA to the Legislature Building where a reception was held.

The Chief Commissioner wrote a commendation letter for the Government of Saskatchewan publication, *A Child Should Know ... Review of Rights and Responsibilities for Children*. The booklet, prepared by the Saskatchewan Action Plan for Children, was developed to acknowledge the 10th anniversary. It examines children's rights and responsibilities that connect them to their family and society.

Policy relating to visible minorities as a designated equity group

In June 1999 the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission ratified a policy relating to visible minorities as a designated equity group.

The Commission's definition of visible minorities is concerned with racism and its impact. In the experience of the Commission, the overwhelming majority of people who experience racism are people whose skin colour is perceived as being "non-white."

The visible minority group is not limited to recent immigrants. It includes people who are born in Canada as well as recent immigrants and first generation Canadians. It should also be noted that the term visible minority does not identify a uniform group. It includes individuals from a wide range of ethnic groups, from many parts of the world.

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission policy adopts, in principle, the definition of visible minorities used in the federal *Employment Equity Act*. For the purposes of equity programs, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission defines members of visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are people of colour."

Members of visible minorities may, for example, be persons of African, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Pacific Island, East Asian, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Arab or Latin American ancestry.

The long-term goal of employment equity plans is to achieve representation of visible minorities throughout an employer's workforce that reflects the representation of visible minorities in the population as a whole. According to Statistics Canada data, this representation is 5.4 percent in Regina and 5.2 percent in Saskatoon and 2.8 percent in Saskatchewan as a whole.

The Commission's policy states that employment equity plans should also include:

- Anti-racism policies and procedures
- Measures to address the glass ceiling, with respect to visible minorities
- A fair process to evaluate and recognize non-Canadian credentials
- A review of practices that may constitute barriers for visible minorities, such as limitations upon people who speak with an accent
- Policies and activities to encourage respect for cultural diversity.

To date, the Commission has approved equity plans for four groups: women, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and visible minorities.

National CASHRA conference

The Chief Commissioner along with former Acting Assistant Director Vera-Marie Wolfe attended the annual national conference of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) in Montreal. The theme of this year's

conference was "Human Rights and Freedoms: A Springboard for a More Humane World". The program included workshops on issues of poverty and equality, systemic racism and rights of the child.

At the CASHRA annual business meeting, delegates adopted two resolutions. The first sought to encourage more frequent meetings of federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for human rights.

The second resolution urged federal, provincial and territorial governments to confirm their commitment to Canada's international human rights obligations by taking action, so that all citizens enjoy adequate social conditions and by addressing the discrimination faced by poorer Canadians, including examining the appropriateness of adding social condition as a prohibited ground of discrimination in their human rights legislation.

Special Education Review Committee

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission was one of many organizations and individuals to provide a submission to the Special Education Review Committee examining services for students with exceptional needs.

In its submission, the Commission pointed out that *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* provides the authority to promote the equal dignity and rights of students with disabilities through both equity programs and the complaint system.

The Commission believes that proactive initiatives like equity plans are the best hope for creating equitable welcoming school environments for students with disabilities.

The complaint system, however, acts as a necessary complement to voluntary equity measures. It not only provides access to remedies in individual cases, but also – through the development of case law – provides insights into the meaning of equality and the obligations of educators or other service providers.

The subject addressed by the review committee is an ongoing concern for the Commission because it receives regular complaints from students and parents alleging disability discrimination in the education system.

During the past ten years the Commission has received 30 complaints of discrimination in education on the basis of physical disability and 15 based on mental disability. The issues raised by the complaints include harassment, the duty of reasonable accommodation and integration.

A copy of the written submission can be found on the Commission's website at www.gov.sk.ca/shrc/

Namibia Public Service Commission

The Saskatchewan Public Service Commission is partnered with the Namibia Public Service Commission to establish networks and share information on the role of the public service. In November 1999 a delegation from Namibia travelling in Saskatchewan requested a meeting with representatives from the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. The delegation wanted an overview of the Commission and its work. After meeting with Commission staff, the Namibian delegation commended the scope of the Commission's role in Saskatchewan.

Breaking the Silence: Gays and lesbians in our schools

The third annual Breaking the Silence conference, sponsored by the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan, is designed to try and make schools a safer place for gay and lesbian students and teachers.

The Chief Commissioner was joined on a panel by representatives from the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation, the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, Saskatchewan Education and the League of Education Administrators, Directors and Superintendents to address the issue of educational equality for students and professional integrity for teachers and staff.

Since 1993 when sexual orientation protections were added to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, the Commission has received 38 sexual orientation complaints.

The Chief Commissioner noted that more needs to be done to change attitudes towards gay and lesbian students. That can be accomplished by increased educational activities and working with school divisions and their curriculum committees. Both education and employment equity programs are the best strategies for fighting long term systemic discrimination.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Commissioners and staff in Regina and Saskatoon participated in commemorative events March 21, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

March 21 reminds us of the long history of racism; it was on this day in 1960 that armed South African police fired upon anti-apartheid demonstrators. The day reminds us of the need to fight racism everywhere.

Commission staff attended the City of Saskatoon's Race Relations Committee on the Living in Harmony ceremony, held to honor members of the community and community organizations for their longstanding efforts to eliminate racism. Representatives of all levels of government; municipal, provincial and federal, briefly discussed the importance of racial harmony and the challenges to achieve harmony.

Commission staff also attended a ceremony organized by the Saskatoon Intercultural Association where displays of several large murals were unveiled. The murals, created by students from the Saskatoon Board of Education, each depicted different aspects of peace, harmony and friendship. More than 300 persons attended the ceremony held in the gymnasium of Aden Bowman Collegiate. Several members of the Commission also attended a special forum, organized by the association and held at a Saskatoon hotel where issues of racism were discussed.

Regina staff and Commissioners took part in a daylong family oriented event at the Al Ritchie Community Centre that celebrated that city's diversity.

Assistant director Donalda Ford told a province-wide radio audience March 21 of the importance of March 21. She also discussed the challenges facing Saskatchewan in the future and answered questions during the phone in portion of the broadcast.

"Poverty and unequal access to educational, housing and health provision, increasingly determine social progress and quality of life. National Human Rights Institutions cannot meet the needs of vulnerable groups without addressing economic, social and cultural rights. Some do so already, but many have yet to put resources in economic, social and cultural rights or take them seriously."

—International Council on Human Rights Performance and Legitimacy: National Human Rights Institutions.

The Complaint Process: An Overview

Those who believe they have been discriminated against in a way that is contrary to *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* may complain to the Commission. As well, a third party, or the Commission itself may initiate a complaint.

The staff of the investigations unit is responsible for receiving and investigating complaints. **Intake** staff are the first to look at the complaint and assess it. They decide whether the complaint falls within the jurisdiction of the *Code* and whether there is reasonable basis for believing discrimination occurred.

If those standards are met, the complaint is **formalized.** This means a complaint form is drafted and signed and it moves to the resolution stage of the process. There are two ways to resolve a complaint: through early resolution or investigation.

Early resolution enables complainants and respondents to negotiate a settlement and dispose of a complaint without going through a full investigation. The parties may choose early resolution before an investigation ever begins. Or, they may decide to atten pt settlement when they are partway through an investigation. The settlement process can be achieved by way of face to face mediation, shuttle negotiation or a combination of the two. In cases involving Aboriginal complainants, the Commission has begun utilizing talking circles. This concept, based on First Nations observances and chaired by Aboriginal elders, is intended to provide Aboriginal people with a more culturally relevant method of resolving human rights disputes.

If the parties do not want to settle early on in the process, the Commission will conduct a full and impartial **investigation**. Investigators have the authority to interview people who may have information about a complaint. They can also examine relevant records and documents, including employee records.

If there is not enough evidence to support the allegation, the complaint is dismissed. If there is enough evidence to support the complaint, the parties are once again invited to try to settle the matter.

If a settlement cannot be reached, the complaint is referred to the Commissioners. The Commissioners may (and usually do) direct the Minister of Justice to appoint an independent **board of inquiry** to conduct a formal inquiry. The board hears the evidence from both sides and makes a decision about whether the *Code* has been violated. If there has been a violation of the *Code*, the board will order whatever remedies it considers appropriate.

"The human rights movement embodies the energy and dynamics of a widespread popular demand for respect for human rights. It is the driving force which holds the international community to account and demands that the world make provisions for the proper protection of human rights and the prevention of human rights violations."

–Nathaniel Bimba
Peace Justice and Freedom
Human Rights Challenges for the New Millennium

Complaint Resolution Investigations Unit

The investigations unit works with other units to protect people's rights and discourage discrimination. Its role is to investigate human rights complaints and attempt to settle them.

Most complaints received by the Commission in 1999-2000 involved discrimination in the workplace (64.8 percent) and in public services (17.4 percent). The largest number of complaints involved discrimination on the basis of disability (33 percent), sex (26.2 percent) and ancestry (19.2 percent).

For the first time, the Commission received more disability complaints than complaints based on discrimination (see Table 1).

Progress Towards Goals

Commission staff continued to work toward greater efficiency in processing complaints during 1999-2000.

Two major initiatives were undertaken in particular. The first initiative was the adoption of a new caseload management software system. The Commission looked for a system to replace its former system that was not Y2K compliant. Several models were examined with the one chosen having the dual capability of providing detailed statistical information about complaints being handled by the Commission, as well as assisting investigation staff manage their caseloads.

Under the new system, individual investigators, mediators and intake staff enter data at key points in the process. This allows for a more detailed statistical analysis of the progress of complaints. The software also acts as a central record-keeping system for information relating to complaint files.

The second initiative was the adoption of caseload management guidelines. Under these guidelines, staff are required to respond to intake calls within 24 hours where reasonable and practical. Early resolution attempts to settle a complaint must show some possibility of success within 60 days and the goal is to complete investigations within 180 days.

The investigations unit is working toward presenting a complaint file to the Commission for direction of a board of inquiry or ratification of a settlement within 12 months from the date the complaint was filed.

These measures are amongst the most progressive in Canada. The Commission is mindful that we are affecting the rights of individuals. This requires careful attention to due process.

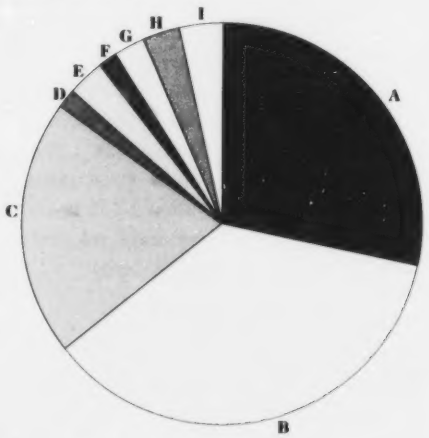
Together, these measures have resulted in a reduction in the backlog from a high of 89 in 1995, to 51 in 1997, to 13 files in 1998, where it has remained more or less for the past two years.

This means investigators are working on more current files, the turnaround is quicker and the caseloads are slightly lower.

At year-end, staff completed 111 investigation files, compared to 92 from the year before.

Goals for 2000-01

- To reduce investigative time so that all files are investigated within 180 days.
- To move more files to settlement, earlier on in the process.
- To maintain the backlog below the mid-teens and reduce the unassigned time to 30 days.
- To continue improving our efficiency with the case management system.



	Grounds	Number	%
A	Sex (Includes 24 sexual harassment complaints)	56	26.3
B	Mental & Physical Disability	72	33.4
C	Race, Ancestry, Colour, Place of Origin	41	19.2
D	Family Status	3	1.4
E	Age	6	2.8
F	Sexual Orientation	3	1.4
G	Religion	5	2.3
H	Marital Status	6	2.8
I	Receipt of Public Assistance	7	3.3

Settlements

Complainants and respondents can choose to settle a complaint at any point in the complaint process. Before a complaint is investigated, the Commission offers the parties mediation services through its early resolution process. If the Commission concludes, after an investigation, that evidence supports a complaint of discrimination, a second attempt is made to reach a settlement between the two parties. A written agreement is prepared by Commission staff, approved by the parties and ratified by the Commissioners.

The terms of the settlement are intended to compensate the complainant for any damages suffered as a result of the alleged discriminatory treatment. All parties and the Commission must agree to the settlement before it becomes binding.

Settlements could include such terms as compensation for lost wages or other expenses, and payment for humiliation suffered and loss of self-respect. The respondent might also agree to change his or her discriminatory behavior in the future and to apologize.

In 1999-2000, the investigations and legal unit settled 39 complaints: 2 informally, 22 through early resolution, and 15 following a full investigation. This represented approximately 14 percent of the 244 cases completed by both units during the year. (see Tables 2 and 3)

Another 18 complaints were resolved by favorable withdrawals. In these cases, the parties reach a satisfactory agreement but decided to settle matters without the Commission's further involvement. Taken together, settlements and favorable withdrawals accounted for 57 or approximately 25 percent of all cases completed.

Settlement Overview

The largest number of settlements involved allegations of discrimination based on disability, sex and ancestry. The number of complaints from people with disabilities increased as they become aware there are human rights laws they can turn to for protections against discriminatory practices.

Disability

City transit drivers to assist disabled passengers

Transit bus drivers in a Saskatchewan city have begun assisting bus passengers who rely on mobility devices into their seats following a Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission negotiated settlement between the city and a disabled transit user.

The complainant is a wheelchair user who is able to independently board and disembark from low floor buses. However, he is not able to secure himself, due to his disability, and the transit driver refused to assist him after he boarded.

He alleged transit services discriminated against him by requiring that he secure himself into space reserved for wheelchair users on a low floor buses when he boarded.

After he was refused assistance, he was forced to leave the bus and wheel to his home through inclement weather.

Under terms of the agreement, the municipality paid the man $2,750 in humiliation damages. As part of the settlement, the city adopted a policy that directs its transit operators to assist in fastening and releasing restraints for passengers using wheelchairs/scooters who are able to independently board and disembark from low floor buses and appropriately position the wheelchair or scooter.

Lack of accommodation hampers disabled student

In another settlement negotiated by the Commission, a former student at an Aboriginal college was awarded $5,000 after he complained to the Commission he was discriminated against because of his disability.

The student, who had been diagnosed with a learning disability, enrolled for classes in the fall of 1995. He had made arrangements through the special needs office at the campus to write his professors detailing the accommodation he needed to participate in classes.

After classes began, however, the student alleged the accommodations he sought were largely ignored. He was not allowed to take oral exams and was refused permission to have more time to complete papers and exams.

Without admitting liability, the college agreed to pay the student $5,000. The university has since established a special needs policy with a special needs officer whose role is to address the requirements of special needs students.

Failure to accommodate prompts complaint

A settlement addressed employers' obligations to make reasonable efforts to accommodate employees with a disability.

A Regina man with a history of epilepsy agreed to a

settlement of $1,350 after he complained to the Commission he was fired from his janitorial job in an office complex. The man had just begun his first shift with the janitorial service when he suffered a seizure and was taken to a nearby hospital. After he was discharged from hospital, he completed his shift. However, when he returned for his second day of work, his supervisor told him he was no longer employed.

The Courts have interpreted human rights legislation to require employers to reasonably accommodate employees with disabilities. In this case, the man's physician recommended he stay away from heights and chemical fumes. The man could have been accommodated by not requiring him to work around heights or chemical fumes.

Woman fired while on sick leave

A Big River woman received $34,142 from her former employer as compensation for being fired from her nursing job while she was on sick leave.

Employers cannot refuse to continue to employ someone because of an illness or disability. Employers have a duty to accommodate that illness or injury by allowing an appropriate leave of absence to recover, unless this causes an undue hardship on the employer.

During 1999-2000 the Commission received 36 complaints alleging discrimination in employment because of disability. They accounted for 32 percent of all employment-related complaints.

Sex Discrimination

Woman fired after telling employer she was pregnant

A case resulted in the payment of $6,500 to a Saskatoon woman who was hired for an office position when she was eight weeks pregnant.

The day after she was interviewed and offered the receptionist-bookkeeper position, she informed her supervisor she was pregnant and would require four or five months leave.

The office manager then told her not to come into work at her scheduled time and a few days later she was told that someone else had been hired for the job.

Maternity leave cost new mother her job

A Regina woman who worked as a receptionist for an auto dealer received a $1,500 settlement from her former employer after she was fired from her job while on maternity leave.

The woman had worked for the company for more than a year when she went on maternity leave. However, when she was due to return to work, she was told her position had been given to another employee. She was offered work in another area of the company but that position required weekend and evening work.

Bonspiel refused female curlers

Two women employed in the Lloydminster oil industry successfully challenged an annual curling bonspiel that prohibited female teams from entering the competition.

The women complained that the bonspiel afforded competitors the opportunity to strengthen working relationships and further industry contacts. By being denied entry into the bonspiel, women were prevented from developing and improving business relationships.

A settlement negotiated by the Commission resulted in the name of the bonspiel being changed to remove reference to it as a male only event, and to allow a format that permits teams with any combination of men and women playing in any position.

Pay Equity

Wage differences settled

Barbara Hall complained to the Commission in 1989 that cashiers (mostly women) at Safeway make less than food clerks (mostly men) and that cashiers have fewer opportunities to move into full time positions.

The Commission certified the complaint as a class action complaint, and Canada Safeway disputed certification. The Court of Appeal, in an August 1997 decision ruled the complaint should not have been certified in the manner it was. In order to address the issue raised by Ms. Hall, the Commission filed its own complaint on December 19, 1997 pursuant to section 27(3) of the *Code* against Canada Safeway Limited; the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union; and the United Food and Commercial Workers. The complaint alleged violations of section 16 and 18 of the *Code*.

The Commission's complaint was challenged in the Courts by Canada Safeway. On April 9, 1999 the Court of Queen's Bench decided the Commission had properly initiated its complaint against Canada Safeway.

In June 1999, Canada Safeway reached collective bargaining agreements with its two unions. The agreements moved the wages for cashiers, and other

female dominated classifications, up to the rates for food clerks. The increases will close the gap between cashiers and food clerks. On September 2, 1999 the Commission withdrew its complaint against Canada Safeway, RWDSU and UFCW as a result of collectively bargained agreements which addressed the pay equity issue. The Commission is satisfied that, as a result of the pay equity complaint, women employed at Canada Safeway have achieved equity through the collective agreements and accordingly has withdrawn its complaint.

Sexual Harassment

Harasser attends harassment seminar

A woman who alleged she was the victim of ongoing sexual harassment at her Saskatoon workplace agreed to a settlement that resulted in the company owner attending a Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission sponsored sexual harassment educational seminar as part of the negotiated settlement.

The employer also agreed to establish and post an anti-harassment poster in the workplace.

The woman complained that while she was employed at the company, the company owner made unwanted advances towards her including unwanted touching, visiting her home when she was alone and showing her undue attention.

She quit her position, citing a poisoned work environment.

Waitress cites harassment

A hotel owner agreed to pay a woman employed as a waitress $1,000 as compensation for sexual harassment during her employment. The woman alleged harassing behavior such as comments about her physical appearance, unwanted touching and invitations to join him in his hotel room. She quit her job because she could no longer tolerate the ongoing harassment.

Manager's behavior intolerable

In another sexual harassment case, a waitress in a Regina restaurant was subjected to unwanted physical contact by the restaurant's manager after the restaurant had closed for the day. Despite repeatedly telling the manager his behavior was unacceptable, it continued. She, too, quit her job because she could not tolerate the harassment. The manager agreed to a settlement negotiated by the Commission. He agreed to pay the woman $1,500 and also agreed to view a Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission videotape on sexual harassment.

Receptionist stands up to harassers

A woman who worked as a receptionist for a small Regina manufacturing company complained to the Commission the men in the office directed crude sexual remarks and comments towards her on a daily basis. In addition to the sexual remarks, the men in the office would improperly touch the woman.

In a settlement negotiated by the Commission, the woman agreed to accept $2,200 in compensation. The Company agreed to place a copy of the Commission's pamphlet "Sexual Harassment" on an employee bulletin board where it would be seen by all employees.

Physical contact prompts complaint

A woman who complained to the Commission that her employer engaged in inappropriate physical contact agreed to settle her sexual harassment complaint.

The Regina woman complained her former employer touched her breasts several times during the course of her employment. He also made light of her assertion that his behavior was inappropriate.

She received $4,000 compensation, a written apology and her former employer agreed to participate in a sexual harassment workshop conducted by the Commission.

Ancestry

Denied apartment because of ancestry

A North Battleford woman who complained of racial discrimination when she attempted to rent a North Battleford apartment agreed to accept $550 in compensation.

The woman, of Cree ancestry, complained to the Commission that the manager of the apartment building refused to rent her an apartment because of her Aboriginal ancestry.

She had inquired about renting a suite and was told by the resident manager that although someone else had indicated an interest in the suite, the woman could rent it if the first transaction fell through. When the woman called back two days later, she was told the suite was rented. She then had a friend inquire about renting a suite and the friend was told there were suites available.

In addition to compensating the women, the owner of the apartment building agreed to post an anti-discrimination policy in the apartment block.

Racial slur hurtful

In another case of race discrimination, the owners of a rural service station agreed to pay a Saskatoon woman $450 in settlement when she complained to the Commission she had been the subject of a racial slur.

The woman had stopped at the service station to purchase gasoline and other goods. After paying for her initial purchases, she decided to make further purchases as well. When she was attempting to pay for the second set of goods, the female clerk became irritated and unpleasant and directed a racial slur towards her.

Receipt of Public Assistance

Woman denied apartment settles complaint

The settlement of a complaint against a Regina property management company highlights the discrimination sometimes experienced by people receiving public assistance when attempting to secure housing.

The complainant, a single mother, attempted to rent a two-bedroom apartment but was refused by the building manager because she was receiving social assistance at the time. Without admitting liability, the respondents agreed to pay the complainant $400.

Board of Inquiry and Court Decisions

Religious Discrimination

Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission v. Board of Education of Saskatoon and Saskatoon School Division No. 13

A board of inquiry ruled that Saskatoon Public School Board interfered with the right to freedom of religious practice and discriminated because of religion by encouraging the use of the Lord's Prayer and Bible readings in public schools. The complaint was initiated in December 1993 when nine parents, holding various religious beliefs, challenged School Board policy.

Retired Justice Kenneth Halvorson heard both factual evidence and expert opinion concerning the negative effects of religious practices that are in conflict with the religious beliefs of some students. He noted that, "modern educators take the child-centered approach that each child has an equal right to develop self-esteem."

The School Board argued that it had acted within its constitutional rights. Mr. Justice Halvorson acknowledged that School Boards do have constitutional rights with respect to religious instruction. But the School Board had lost its constitutional immunity by allowing individual teachers to decide when to say the Lord's Prayer and Bible readings.

"Decisions on prayers is too important to allow elected boards to delegate responsibility to unelected staff," Mr. Justice Halvorson wrote in his decision.

In conclusion, although the School Board has a right to direct the use of the Lord's Prayer and to provide some religious instruction, Mr. Justice Halvorson urged the School Board to "shed its image as a backwater of religious tolerance by declining to direct that the Lord's Prayer be recited in public schools."

He also recommended the provincial legislature repeal section 182 (3) of the *Education Act* to convey a message that religious discrimination in public schools is not condoned.

Sexual Harassment

Lillian Sabo v. Bob Mullen and Prairie Greenhouses Ltd.

A Craven woman told a board of inquiry she was discriminated against on the basis of sex, by her employer when she worked for him at Prairie Lily Greenhouses.

The board heard Lillian Sabo tell of three separate incidents during which Bob Mullen, owner of the Greenhouse, touched her breasts while she was office manager in 1996 and 1997.

Midway through the board hearing, Mullen agreed to provide Sabo with a written apology and pay $4,000.

In addition to the apology and cash settlement, Mullen agreed to attend a half-day workshop on sexual harassment in the workplace, conducted by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

Disability

James Turanich v. Government of Saskatchewan

A board of inquiry ruled that James Turanich had not been discriminated against because of his disability.

Turanich, who was a municipal administrative advisor with the provincial government, had been diagnosed with dyslexia. He alleged his employer did nothing to accommodate his disability while his employer argued it accommodated Turanich by relieving him of some of his duties. Turanich maintained that was discriminatory. The board heard that before any further changes would have accommodated Turanich's disability, he quit his position.

In its ruling the board concluded the employer took reasonable steps to accommodate Turanich. The Commission did not appeal the decision.

"The essence of equality is to be treated according to one's own merit, capabilities and circumstances."

—Supreme Court Justice Beverly McLachlin
***Meiorin* decision**

Court Decisions

Ancestry

Strongarm et al v. Calyniuk Restaurants

The Court of Queen's Bench ruled the length of time it took to complete an investigation into racial discrimination and hold a board of inquiry prejudiced the respondent and precluded the respondent from obtaining a fair hearing.

Mr. Justice Peter Dielschneider issued his ruling on an appeal by the Commission of a board of inquiry decision which stayed complaints by 18 persons against a Saskatoon nightclub, citing unreasonable delay in bringing the complaints forward.

A group of Aboriginal people brought a complaint against the club after its managers forced them to leave the club because they did not have the necessary identification. The incident occurred in May of 1994 but a board of inquiry was not convened until

December of 1998. At the time of the initial complaint, the Commission had more than 80 cases backlogged, waiting for investigators to be assigned. At the board of inquiry, lawyers for the respondent successfully argued that the delay had prejudiced their case.

When the Commission appealed the board ruling, the Court upheld the ruling, saying the delay would have precluded the club from the reasonable possibility of obtaining a fair hearing.

Mr. Justice Dielschneider wrote: "It is painfully clear that the Commission was, during the period under consideration, woefully under-funded. That is the sole factor giving rise to the events which prejudiced a fair hearing. Because of lack of funds the Commission was, in this case, unable to carry out its legislative mandate."

Employment Discrimination

Holly Frechette v. Ralph Warman and Namraw Lumber Ltd.

The Court of Queen's Bench upheld a board of inquiry award of $17,342 to a hardware clerk who said she was denied full-time hours and eventually fired because of her sex.

Holly Frechette complained to the Commission in December 1993 that Ralph Warman and Namraw Lumber Ltd. had discriminated against her because of her sex. She had been employed from June 1989 to September 1993 at the Kindersley lumber yard and hardware store. She worked primarily inside the store, stocking goods and providing customer service. In 1990, the lumberyard owner reduced her hours of work and two years later hired a male employee to perform essentially the same duties as Frechette. Even though the male employee had less seniority than Frechette, Warman gave him full-time hours in March 1993. Frechette was fired in September 1993 when the owner told her business was slow.

The board of inquiry found there was no evidence the male employee was a better worker than Frechette. It found little tangible evidence supporting the owner's many presumptions Frechette was unable to perform certain work. The board also found that Warman remarked at the time of Frechette's dismissal that the male employee, because of his gender, was better qualified for yard work than a woman.

Warman and Namraw Lumber Ltd. appealed the board of inquiry decision to the Court of Queen's Bench which dismissed the appeal.

Jurisdiction of Human Rights Tribunals

Workers' Compensation Board v. SHRC and Crystal Sjodin

A board of inquiry examining allegations of pregnancy discrimination by the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) can proceed, the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal ruled in June. The Court dismissed an appeal by the WCB that sought to prohibit a board from hearing the complaint of Crystal Sjodin.

In her complaint, Sjodin argued that a WCB decision to deny her compensation discriminated against her because of pregnancy.

Sjodin was an employee at Intercontinental Packers when she suffered a workplace injury. She received wage loss benefits for about five months prior to a scheduled corrective surgery. But she had to cancel the surgery because she was pregnant. The WCB then refused to continue paying benefits.

According to WCB policy at the time, an injured worker could not receive compensation unless she participated in rehabilitation programs such as recommended surgery. This was true even if the reason she could not have the surgery was pregnancy. It did not matter that the pregnancy, itself, did not prevent Sjodin from working. In fact, Sjodin continued to work part-time during her pregnancy as much as her injury would allow.

The WCB argued that the decision to deny Sjodin compensation was a matter which fell exclusively within the WCB's jurisdiction. *The Workers' Compensation Act* authorized it to determine who was entitled to compensation. But, the Court of Appeal held that the compensation plan administered by the WCB is a service to the public that is subject to *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. The WCB cannot discriminate in providing this service, even if they are acting within their own legislation. Any law that authorizes a violation of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* is inoperative. A board of inquiry has jurisdiction to determine whether such a violation exists.

Wollf and Regier v. Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited

In April 1999, the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal overturned a decision of the Court of Queen's Bench and ruled that a board of inquiry could consider allegations of sexual harassment in a unionized workplace.

The Court of Queen's Bench decision prohibited the board of inquiry from hearing the complaints of Shannon Regier and Barbara Joan Wollf. They alleged

that they were sexually harassed by their supervisor while working as night cleaners at the Midtown Plaza in Saskatoon. The Judge held that only an arbitrator under the collective agreement could hear the sexual harassment complaints.

The Queen's Bench Judge was giving effect to the *Trade Union Act*. That Act gives arbitrators exclusive jurisdiction to determine all matters arising under a collective agreement. As sexual harassment violates the terms and conditions of employment under collective agreements, the Judge held that the matter must be dealt with by an arbitrator not a human rights board of inquiry.

The Court of Appeal disagreed. It held that an allegation of a human rights violation is not a dispute with respect to the application of a collective agreement. A human right complaint deals with fundamental rights established under *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. There is a public interest component and wide powers are given to a board to redress a violation of these guaranteed rights. As the essence of a complaint is not the resolution of a dispute under a collective agreement, a board of inquiry under the *Code* has jurisdiction.

Cadillac Fairview Corporation sought to appeal that decision to the Supreme Court of Canada but was denied leave to appeal.

In the end, the Courts have upheld the right of unionized employees to seek remedies under *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. Employees do not have to give up this right simply because they negotiate a collective agreement with their employer.

Accessibility

SHRC v. Henry Ripplinger and HKR Collections Fine Art Limited

The Court of Queen's Bench in July upheld a 1998 board of inquiry decision requiring Regina businessman Henry Ripplinger to upgrade the washrooms at his Regina tearoom-gift shop to become wheelchair accessible.

A 1993 board of inquiry determined the lack of access to the washrooms contravened Section 12 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. Ripplinger successfully appealed that decision to the Court of Queen's Bench but was subsequently overturned by the Court of Appeal and board of inquiry. Although the entrance to the facility is wheelchair accessible, the businessman did not make the washrooms accessible.

In its 1998 decision the board remarked: "It lacks common sense to invite a wheelchair reliant person onto the premises for purposes of consuming food and liquor but not to make the washrooms accessible."

Mr. Ripplinger has since given notice of his intention to appeal the Court of Queen's Bench decision with the Court of Appeal.

Intervention in the Supreme Court of Canada

British Columbia Human Rights Commission v. Blencoe

On January 24, 2000, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, joined with five other human rights commissions to intervene in the Supreme Court of Canada in the case of *British Columbia Human Rights Commission v. Robin Blencoe*.

Blencoe successfully argued in the B.C. Court of Appeal that his right to liberty and security of the person, protected by section 7 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* had been violated when the B.C. Human Rights Commission took too long to process two complaints of sexual harassment. According to Blencoe there was serious damage to his reputation and dignity by allowing these complaints against him to drag on for more than two years. The Court of Appeal agreed and prohibited a human rights tribunal from proceeding with the complaints.

For a variety of reasons delays often occur as complaints are processed through initial screening, attempts at mediation, investigation and referral to a tribunal hearing. Commissions are chronically under-funded, and the process is complex. All Commissions are concerned about delays and are working to reduce them. But they also believed that delays do not violate the rights of respondents under the Charter.

The Saskatchewan Commission intervened to argue that the complex process that a complaint proceeds through is designed to protect the interests of respondents. A complaint cannot be referred to a hearing until attempts have been made to settle the matter and the allegations have been investigated and found to have merit. Delays brought about by the complex process affect both respondents and complainants.

The Saskatchewan Commission argued that any solution to unacceptable delays must recognize and balance the rights of both complainants and respondents. By simply prohibiting the complaint from proceeding, the B.C. Court of Appeal recognized only the rights of respondents. Saskatchewan therefore joined with other Commissions in arguing that the Appeal Court decision should be overturned.

(After year-end, the Supreme Court of Canada rendered its decision – The Court of Appeal decision was reversed and the tribunal was allowed to hear the complaints of sexual harassment. The S.C.C. decision will be reported in the next annual report.)

Employment Equity

The Commission has the legislative mandate to promote equality through the approval and monitoring of equity programs under section 47 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. The Commission's equity initiatives have focused on two areas: employment and education.

The vision of employment equity is an inclusive workplace that benefits from the resources of a diverse workforce and enables all groups to contribute to the community's economic well-being.

Since 1980, the Commission has approved private and public sector employment equity programs in Saskatchewan. The Commission currently monitors 37 employment equity plans. These employers are leading the way in demonstrating Saskatchewan workplaces can become representative of the communities they serve. They embody the positive qualitative and quantitative changes brought about by a diverse workforce and are building places of employment that include, rather than exclude, women, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, and visible minority people.

Some changes have taken place in the ranks of equity employers. Weyerhaeuser Saskatchewan has taken over SaskFor MacMillan. Consequently, SaskFor MacMillan will no longer be submitting equity reports as a separate employer, but will be included in statistical information and equity initiatives reported by Weyerhaeuser Saskatchewan.

The Law Society of Saskatchewan was added to the list of small employers with equity plans. The Law Society is the body legislated by the Government of Saskatchewan to regulate the legal profession. It has 20 employees. We commend the Law Society for its commitment to have a workforce that is representative of the designated groups in the working-age population of the province.

Fast approval process for small employers

The Commission adopted a policy for approval of employment equity plans for employers with fewer than 25 employees that makes it easy for them to undertake equity initiatives without a lot of record-keeping and reporting. Besides providing the Commission with data concerning the make-up of its workforce, a small employer is expected to:

- Ensure that its job advertisements and its employment application and recruitment processes do not violate Section 19 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*, except to the extent permitted by the Commission's approval of the employment equity plan
- Encourage applications from members of designated groups where under-represented
- Adopt an anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policy
- Organize an annual educational session(s) for employees on equity issues
- Carry out an accessibility audit.

Progress Report

In Saskatchewan most employment equity programs are voluntary. The majority of equity plans are with public sector employers. They are demonstrating a strong commitment to hire affirmatively from the four designated groups as well as ensuring positive measures are in place to support a diverse workplace.

An employment equity program begins with a detailed survey of the employer's workforce. The plan establishes goals, a timetable for achieving them and special measures to address the workplace's specific needs. The Commission expects employers to make reasonable efforts to implement and monitor their plans and to report annually on their progress.

Employers with equity plans have achieved results and are becoming more representative of the working-age population. Progress is slow, but there has been progress – the foundation and framework of the inclusive workplace is taking shape among employers with equity programs.

In keeping with a three-year monitoring system, the Commission's 1998-1999 employment equity report provided an overview of equity programs in the cities of Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon; Government of Saskatchewan; Northern Lights School Division; Northlands College; Regina Police Service; Regina Public School Division; Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission; and, the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission.

All employers were asked to report on three key areas the Commission saw as advancing the equity agenda. Those areas were:

- Methods used to ensure that managers are accountable for supporting implementation of the program.
- Implementation and evaluation of the corporate education and awareness training for senior and middle managers, human resources personnel and all employees.

- Actions taken to strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations supporting designated group members.

1999-2000 was the third year of focussing on one-third of the employers with approved plans. Equity plans reviewed this year included the Saskatchewan Research Council, The Co-operators, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, the Co-operative Health Centre in Prince Albert, the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, the Community Health Services (Saskatoon) Association Ltd., the John Howard Society and the Regina Women's Community Centre and Sexual Assault Line.

Women

In 1999-2000, women comprised 47.5 percent of the total sponsor workforce. While this representation exceeds the Commission's 45 percent goal, women continue to be concentrated at entry level and clerical positions. Women are under-represented at the senior management level, where they hold only 26 percent of the positions. This indicates women are struggling to break through the glass ceiling. If we examine the number of women with disabilities, Aboriginal women or visible minority women at senior management levels, the proportion is even lower. More work has to be done to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent the advancement of people in the designated groups.

Aboriginal Peoples

In 1999-2000, Aboriginal peoples represented 6.6 percent of the total sponsor workforce. Since the Commission's first summary report of equity employers eight years ago, the representation of Aboriginal peoples has grown from 2.9 percent to 6.6 percent. With the working-age population of Aboriginal people at 12.2 percent, these employers are gradually becoming more representative.

People With Disabilities

In 1999-2000, the workforce representation of people with disabilities in the total sponsor workforce increased to 3.4 percent from 3.1 percent in the previous year. People with disabilities continue to benefit least from employment equity initiatives. They remain far below the Commission's goal of 9.7 percent.

Visible Minority People

Sponsor reports for 1999- 2000 indicated that visible minority people comprised 3 percent of the total sponsor workforce, an increase of .2 percent from the previous year. This percentage is slightly greater than the representation of working-age visible minority people in Saskatchewan. However, visible minority employees are concentrated in sponsor workplaces in Saskatoon and Regina where the visible minority population is higher than the provincial average.

After much consultation with sponsor organizations and organizations representing visible minority people, the Commission adopted a definition of visible minority people for equity purposes.

Goals for 2000-2001

- Continue to build and strengthen partnerships with equity employers, government agencies and organizations that support human rights principles and equity initiatives.
- Work with employers to increase the number of approved equity plans.
- Circulate and finalize the definition of Aboriginal peoples for equity purposes.
- Continue to refine and improve the monitoring process.

"Extreme poverty rates among Aboriginal people, recent immigrants and non-permanent residents, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, lone-parent families and unattached individuals are evident in most communities. This suggests that there are real barriers preventing these groups from acquiring adequate incomes. Because these groups are faced with employment disadvantages unlike those faced by other people in Canada, improvements in the labor market alone are not the the sole solution of their structural poverty."

—Kevin K. Lee
Urban Poverty in Canada
A statistical profile

Education Equity

K-12 Program

In 1985, the Commission launched an education equity program for Aboriginal students in response to research showing that as many as 90 percent of those students were leaving school before completing Grade 12.

It was clear that Aboriginal children were not receiving the same benefits from the educational system as their non-Aboriginal classmates. The Commission asked school boards with significant numbers of Aboriginal students to develop education equity programs under section 47 of the *Code*. Programs focused on five areas: curriculum; school policies and practices; parental involvement; cross-cultural training for teachers; and efforts to increase the number of Aboriginal teachers.

By 1989, most school boards with significant enrollments of Aboriginal students had equity plans. These plans have evolved over time and now include anti-racism or anti-discrimination policies, training for all staff and procedures to deal with discriminatory incidents.

There are currently 19 approved plans in K-12 school divisions with approximately 71,580 students, 20.4 percent of whom are of Aboriginal ancestry.

A look back over 10 years of monitoring revealed an overall decrease of 4.5 percent in the total number of students in school divisions with equity plans between 1989 and 1998-99. However, there was an increase of 32.6 percent in the total number of Aboriginal students in these school divisions during the same period.

Sharing Responsibility for Equity in Education

The success of the Commission's education equity program has depended on many partnerships forged over the years with educational bodies and community groups.

These cooperative relationships have developed, and a number of education partners now share formal responsibility for equity in the K-12 system. This was the result of a commitment by Saskatchewan Education in 1994 to provide leadership in moving equity along at a faster pace in the province's education system. The Equity in Education Forum is composed of representatives from the Commission, Saskatchewan Education, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, League of Education Administrators, Directors and Superintendents, Gabriel Dumont Institute, the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina.

This has been an active year for the Equity in Education Forum. In addition to ongoing development of equity implementation, the Forum has been interested in meeting with school divisions and educators about equity issues. We had the opportunity to meet with representative of the College of Education, University of Saskatchewan to discuss equity education for beginning teachers and equity initiatives and strategies in teacher education programs. We were also pleased to meet with representatives of Sask Rivers School Division in Prince Albert to discuss equity work being done in that school division.

In *Our Children, Our Communities and Our Future: Equity in Education*, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission works with Saskatchewan Education and education related organizations to establish an education culture and environment that supports all students so they can receive maximum benefit and opportunity from the K-12 education system.

Gathering 2000

Members of the Commission, together with representatives from a diverse cross-section of educators and members of the Aboriginal community, met to discuss equity in education and actions for Aboriginal teachers and students at Gathering 2000, a two-day conference in Saskatoon, sponsored by Saskatchewan Education and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation. Commission staff were represented on the conference planning committee.

Recent Saskatchewan research examining experiences of Aboriginal students and teachers was presented and a number of key research recommendations were put forward by the researchers. The conference challenged participants to develop strategies and action plans in response to the research, so as to provide a rewarding experience for Aboriginal people in the education system.

Expanding Equity in K-12

The Commission will continue to support individual school boards by approving and monitoring K-12 education equity plans, while working with its partners on the Forum to develop plans to address the needs of all students.

Post-Secondary Program

Most post-secondary education equity plans refer only to Aboriginal people. Some, though, are broader. For example, the College of Arts and Science at the University of Saskatchewan has an equity program for female students in the math department. The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) program covers all four designated groups. Other post-secondary institutions participating in education equity plans include the Colleges of Nursing, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy and Nutrition, Western College of Veterinary Medicine and the School of Physical Therapy at the University of Saskatchewan. Gabriel Dumont Institute (preparatory, technical and university programs), Northern Teacher Education Program and Saskatchewan Urban Teacher Education Program also have approved plans.

The Commission monitors all post-secondary programs on an annual basis. Because of limited financial resources, the Commission has been unable to organize an annual seminar for post-secondary institutions with approved plans.

Goals for 2000-2001

- Increase the number of approved equity plans.
- Expand equity plans to comply with the policy framework of the Equity in Education Forum.
- Continue to build and strengthen effective partnerships with educational institutions, educational agencies, and other organizations supportive of education equity.

"As Indigenous peoples enter the twenty-first century, the need is great for the world's people to embrace a consciousness that enables all peoples to enrich their character and dignity. This consciousness should allow the once powerless voices of Indigenous peoples to emerge from their roots and cultural experiences, and should welcome these voices as positive contributions to diversity rather than as sources of prejudice."

—Marie Battiste
James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson
Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage

Public Education

Public education is a vital part of the Commission's mandate. The Code directs the Commission not only to investigate complaints, but also to do educational work that will prevent discrimination from occurring.

The Commission provides public education about human rights through print materials such as newsletters and pamphlets, through speaking engagements at meetings, conferences and workshops, through networking and the media, and through the internet.

The Commission's web site can be found at http://www.gov.sk.ca/shrc. It contains Commission policies, pamphlets, recent issues of the SaskRights and Equity Forum newsletters, an article index and a list of approximately 100 videos available for loan. It is linked with other human rights web sites, and can be used to download *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code and Regulations.*

The Commission sees a need for much greater public education than its budget permits. Over time, the Commission's educational resources have diminished because of the growing need to allocate funds to the complaint system. In 1999-2000, the Commission provided 116 presentations. The Commission receives many more requests for public education than it is able to accommodate. Employers, educators, unions, community organizations and others have expressed a need for more print materials, electronic information, presentations, policy guidance and staff training.

Some Educational Activities in 1999-2000

The following are examples of the many educational activities and presentations undertaken this year:

- The Chief Commissioner addressed a luncheon attended by Saskatchewan Legal Aid staff on diversity in the workplace.
- Commission staff met with a delegation of officials from Namibia, including the Chair of the Namibian Public Service Commission, to share information about human rights in Saskatchewan.
- Staff made three presentations on human rights issues relating to students with disabilities to about 90 teachers and students at the University of Saskatchewan College of Education.
- The education equity advisor gave a presentation on preventing harassment in schools to approximately 50 vice-principals from the Saskatoon Public School Division.
- Several presentations were made to Grade 11 and 12 students in Law 30 classes as well as to adult students in work readiness programs and English as a Second Language classes.
- Staff traveled to Pelican Lake First Nations in northern Saskatchewan to deliver a presentation on human rights issues to the graduating class of the Pelican Lake high school.
- A presentation on harassment and the duty to accommodate was delivered to employees of SaskFor MacMillan in Hudson Bay.
- Staff participated in the Youth for Human Rights Conference held in Saskatoon. More than 50 youth from across the province attended. A Commission staff member conducted a workshop on sexual harassment.
- Staff participated on a panel dealing with accessibility and the courts at the National Association of Canadian Court Administrator's conference in Saskatoon. The Chief Commissioner moderated the panel.

Human Rights in the Workplace

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and the Saskatchewan Association on Human Rights continued to co-sponsor seminars for business and unions on human rights issues in the workplace.

About 50 Prince Albert and area business and union representatives attended an April seminar in Prince Albert. More than 70 private and public sector employers and union representatives attended the day-long seminar in Saskatoon in November. And in March of this year, about 50 Regina-based union and business representatives attended a similar seminar conducted by Commission staff.

The purpose of these seminars is to allow participants the opportunity to discuss first hand with Commission staff, the role of the Commission in Saskatchewan and to increase awareness of human rights law as it applies to the workplace.

Presentations included an overview of human rights law, a description of the complaint process, information on sexual harassment and job accommodation and a session answering questions employers ask most frequently.

Commission statistics indicate about 55 percent of complaints to the Commission originate from workplace incidents. A better understanding of human rights legislation and support for human rights principles in the workplace leads to a more harmonious workplace, less absenteeism and staff turnover.

Educational Partnerships

In its 1996 review of Saskatchewan's human rights legislation, the Commission identified the need to share responsibility for human rights protection with other groups and agencies. In keeping with that principle, the Commission undertook the following joint educational projects in 1999-2000.

- The Commission collaborated with Amnesty International Saskatoon branch to stage a candlelight march December 10 to commemorate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The Commission participated in the planning of Gathering 2000, a provincial education equity conference that focused on Aboriginal education.
- Commission staff and members of the Public Legal Education Association (PLEA) jointly organized a Youth for Human Rights Conference to provide about 50 young people from across the province with an overview of the Code and how it affects them.
- Commission staff in Regina and Saskatoon were involved in planning sessions for March 21 events in both cities. Staff and Commissioners in Regina and Saskatoon then attended events in their respective cities to commemorate March 21, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Print Materials

The Commission produces educational material - approximately 15 pamphlets on human rights topics and Commission procedures. Thousands of pamphlets are distributed each year. Staff also prepares guidelines, reports, policies and other print materials to assist the public in understanding human rights issues and the *Code*.

In 1999-2000 the Commission handled 85 media calls and issued several news releases about settlements, boards of inquiry and equity programs. An editorial on racism and another commemorating International Human Rights Day were written and distributed to Saskatchewan daily and weekly newspapers.

Staff responded to more than 3,500 inquiries about the *Code*, human rights issues and Commission activities by telephone, letter and to callers who drop into the Commission offices.

Goals for 2000-2001

- Provide public education to the extent financial resources allow.
- Develop a strategic plan for public education.
- Increase public education in rural areas and in urban centres outside Regina and Saskatoon.
- Develop partnerships with community organizations.

"Many ethnic and racial groups in Canada have been victims of direct and explicit discrimination in the past. Today discrimination persists in forms more difficult to discern such as stereotypes, assumptions and singular viewpoints. It manifests itself as systems, practices, policies and laws that appear neutral, but that, under close inspection have serious detrimental consequences for members of ethnic and racial communities."

—Peter Rosenthal
The Criminality of Racial Harassment

Exemptions

The Commission has the authority to grant exemptions from the *Code* to employers, public service providers, educational institutions, business owners, landlords, professional associations and trade unions.

Exemptions permit individuals and organizations to carry out activities that would otherwise violate the *Code*. They are granted where the Commission considers them "necessary and advisable," or where an exemption promotes human rights principles of fairness and equality or complements an equity program. Most exemptions directly advance *Code* objectives. For example:

- The Commission approved an exemption for the Saskatoon Police Service to give preference to persons of Aboriginal ancestry when recruiting and hiring Aboriginal Resource Officers.
- The Commission granted approval to the Saskatchewan Women's Secretariat so that preference could be given to single-parent women enrolled in their second year at an approved Saskatchewan post-secondary institution, when awarding Millennium Scholarships.
- The Commission approved the Children's Advocate's request for hiring persons between 16 and 25 years of age when recruiting and hiring a Youth Coordinator.
- Approval was granted to the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) to allow preference to be given to the four designated groups (women, persons with disabilities, persons of Aboriginal ancestry, members of visible minorities), when recruiting and hiring new staff.

In 1999-2000, the Commission received 17 new applications for exemption and granted 16. Exemptions were granted from section 12 (public services) section 13 (education), section 15 (contracts) section 16 (employment) and section 19 (pre-employment advertisements, job applications and job interviews). At the end of March 2000, there were 203 active exemptions, compared with 230 one year earlier.

The process of applying for an exemption is usually straightforward, fast and informal. Typically, the Chief Commissioner and Director considers and decides most applications within a month, referring more complex applications to the Commission as a whole for decision.

The Commissioners may hold an oral hearing if requested to do so by someone with a direct interest in the application or if the Commission believes a public exploration of the facts and issues is required. Exemptions are granted for a limited period of time and may be renewed. A Commission decision on an exemption can be appealed to the courts.

Exemptions represent a steadily growing part of the Commission's workload. The number of files opened account for only part of the rising workload. Because exemptions are monitored and extended on an ongoing basis, current files require a substantial amount of attention.

Accessibility

Human rights legislation requires businesses, government agencies, rental accommodations, schools and workplaces to be accessible to people with disabilities.

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code provides that people with disabilities have the same right as others to receive services and have access to public buildings.

It is critical that businesses and public service providers understand that local and provincial building permits do not guarantee compliance with human rights law. Since the Code takes precedence over all other provincial legislation, builders must comply with human rights legislation as well as building codes.

Protecting the rights of people with disabilities shows most clearly a fundamental tenet of modern human rights law: true equality requires accommodation of differences, not identical treatment regardless of circumstance.

Unfortunately, inaccessible buildings and facilities continue to prevent people with disabilities from accessing many public services and from gaining employment.

Some building owners mistakenly believe making facilities accessible to all members of the public or accommodating employees with disabilities is too costly. However, the *Code* does not oblige any business to undertake accommodations that would cause the business undue financial hardship.

In the past 13 years, the Commission has received approximately 62 accessibility complaints against public service providers in the province. The majority of these complaints were resolved cooperatively. Typically, the parties will negotiate accommodating measures that are within a business's means.

During the past year, the Commission opened eight disability/accessibility files. Five of the files were in the public services category while two were in the area of employment and one in the housing category.

An example of the cooperation between complainant and respondent can be seen in an early resolution settlement that has resulted in physical improvements to a provincial courthouse. Enhancements to the courthouse ensure the building has become a barrier-free facility for persons reliant on mobility devices.

In addition to the improved accessibility at the courthouse, Saskatchewan Justice agreed to implement its accessibility audit of buildings offering justice services to the public, especially with regards to parking, building accessibility and barrier-free washrooms.

Many owners agree that accessibility increases profitability and makes good business sense. According to 1995 Statistics Canada data, 22 percent of Saskatchewan people, an increase of three percent over four years, have some form of disability. They are a large and growing segment of the population, with the potential to be valuable customers and employees.

"Everyone who considers himself or herself to be an advocate for human rights needs to consider the human rights issues facing people with disabilities and to work for the equal protection of the rights of all human beings."

—Richard Sobsey
Peace Justice and Freedom
Human Rights Challenges for the New Millennium

Commission Members

Members of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission are appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council (Cabinet).

Commissioners met eight times during 1999-2000 to set policy, review complaints, ratify settlements, decide whether to send complaints to a board of inquiry, grant exemptions, and consider applications for employment and education equity plans. In February 2000 the Commissioners held a one day strategic planning retreat to discuss racism issues, code amendments, policy and future direction of the Commission.

Commissioners further public education by providing information about the Code, human rights and equality issues. They also participate in community development work on human rights issues.

Donna Scott
Chief Commissioner/Director

Donna Scott was appointed as Chief Commissioner and Director of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission in October of 1996, and was re-appointed in November of 1997.

Scott received her B.A. and LL.B. from the University of Saskatchewan. She was admitted to the Saskatchewan Bar in 1982 and engaged in the private practice of law until becoming a Crown Solicitor with Saskatchewan Justice in 1986. She served as Crown Counsel, Local Registrar for the Unified Family Court and provincial Coordinator of the Family Law Division.

Scott has served on a number of departmental and interdepartmental committees related to family law and human rights matters. She has presented at seminars, university classes as well as provincial, national and international conferences on matters related to family law, children's rights, human rights and equity issues.

Scott has served on the board of directors of the Elizabeth Fry Society and currently serves on the executive, as President of the Public Legal Education Association for Saskatchewan.

Lynn Archdekin
Commission Member

Archdekin is a Saskatoon businesswoman who has a diverse background in the business arena and an extensive knowledge of employee benefits. She has two professional designations, a CEBS (Certified Employee Benefit Specialist) and a FLMI (Fellow of the Life Management Institute). Archdekin brings her experience and perspective as a wheelchair user to her role as Commissioner. She was initially appointed in April 1993, and was designated Deputy Chief Commissioner in September 1996.

Marjorie Hutchinson
Commission Member

Hutchinson has extensive experience in human rights and labour issues. A long-time trade unionist, she was actively involved in the Office and Professional Employees International Union where she acted as shop steward and member of the negotiating committee and the women's committee. Hutchinson has also facilitated courses sponsored by the Canadian Labour Congress. She was appointed to the Commission in January 1994 and reappointed in February 1999.

Christine Lwanga
Commission Member

Lwanga has worked on numerous projects dealing with racism and minority rights. She has been Executive Director of the Saskatoon chapter of Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan, Program Director of the Saskatoon Multicultural Council, and Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Coalition Against Racism. Lwanga continues to be active in the multicultural community, and is a past-president of the African Association of Regina, past president of Immigrant, Refugee and Visible Minority Women of Saskatchewan. She worked with the visible minority community including the multi-cultural council of Saskatchewan and was invited to sit on the South Saskatchewan Community Advisory Committee on Immigration. She has a degree in social work and a Masters degree in Business Administration (MBA). She received her appointment to the Commission in January 1994 and was reappointed in February 1999.

Darren Winegarden
Commission Member

Winegarden is currently senior policy analyst for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and a member of the Law Society of Saskatchewan. He is a member of the Kawacatoose First Nation. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Saskatchewan in 1988 and his Bachelor of Laws from the University of British Columbia in 1991. Winegarden has worked with several First Nations, Tribal Councils and affiliates on a variety of matters including policy and management. He was appointed December 1998.

Commission Staff

Professional human rights staff and administrators carry out the Commission's daily business. In 1999-2000, the Commission's total staff amounted to the equivalent of 19.0 full-time positions. The following individuals worked full-time, part-time, on a casual basis or in term appointments.

Saskatoon Staff

Shelley Bartram, Human Resources Coordinator

Jan Cadman, Secretary

Linda Charlton, Investigator/Facilitator

Pat Cook, Intake Consultant

Chris Corkum, Investigator/Facilitator

Terry Craig, Communications Coordinator

Faye Davis, Investigator/Facilitator

Dianne Derkson, Secretary

Lois Henderson, Budget Coordinator

Tim Korol, Investigator/Facilitator

Genevieve Leslie, Education Equity Advisor

Bev MacSorley, Secretary

Kaye Munro, Secretary

Darien Moore, Staff Solicitor

Yoanna Orman-Cleveland, Secretary

Gerry Parenteau, Investigator/Facilitator

William Rafoss, Supervisor of Investigations

Karen Ross, Secretary

Laurie Adrian Rude, Investigator/Facilitator

Vera-Marie Wolfe, Acting Assistant Director

Milton Woodard, Senior Staff Solicitor

Regina Staff

John Abraham, Investigator

Heidi Chan, Secretary

Laurena Daniels, Intake Consultant

Pat Danforth, Education and Equity Advisor

Lisa Donovan, Secretary

Donalda Ford, Assistant Director

Loretta Gerlach, Investigator/Facilitator

Jenny Heeg, Investigator

Maria Majano-Ponce, Secretary

Robin McMillan, Investigator/Facilitator

Rebecca Otitoju, Secretary

Fran Passmore, Education and Equity Advisor

Mijana Topalovic, Secretary

Pearl Ulmer, Secretary

Statistical Tables

Table 1 – Summary of Complaints Received April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000 by Ground and Category

Category	Age	Aboriginal Ancestry	Other Ancestry[1]	Marital Status	Mental Disability	Physical Disability	Religion[2]	Sexual Harassment	Sex/Other	Sex/Pregnancy	Family Status	Sexual Orientation	Public Assistance	N/A	Total	Percent
Application Forms	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	11	8.5
Bill of Rights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.1
Contracts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.1
Education	0	1	0	0	2	0	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	10	0.5
Employment	5	10	11	2	9	48	1	21	9	17	1	3	0	1	138	64.8
Housing	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	6	1	11	8.5
Occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Professional & Trade Associations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Public Services	1	15	1	4	2	9	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	37	17.4
Publications	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.9
Purchase of Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Reprisals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Trade Unions	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Total	6	26	15	6	13	59	5	24	15	17	3	3	7	14	213	
Percent	2.8	12.2	7.0	2.8	5.7	27.7	2.3	11.3	7.0	8.0	1.4	1.4	3.3	6.6		100.0

1. Other Ancestry includes colour, nationality, place of origin and perceived race.
2. Religion includes creed.

Statistical Tables

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Category	Age	Aboriginal Ancestry	Other Ancestry[1]	Marital Status	Mental Disability	Physical Disability	Religion[2]	Sexual Harassment	Sex/Other	Sex/Pregnancy	Family Status	Sexual Orientation	Public Assistance	N/A	Total	Percent
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Bill of Rights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.1
Contracts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.1
Education	0	1	0	0	2	0	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	10	0.5
Employment	5	10	11	2	9	48	1	21	9	17	1	3	0	1	138	64.8
Housing	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	6	1	11	8.5
Occupations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Professional & Trade Associations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Public Services	1	15	1	4	2	9	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	37	17.4
Publications	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.9
Purchase of Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Reprisals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Trade Unions	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Total	6	26	15	6	13	59	5	24	15	17	3	3	7	14	213	
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1. Other Ancestry includes colour, nationality, place of origin and perceived race.
2. Religion includes creed.

Table 2
Number and Disposition of Complaints in Investigation Unit in 1999-00

Complaints carried into reporting period[1]	**134**
Files opened during period	213
Disposition at intake	
No reasonable grounds/no jurisdiction	58
Withdrawn (favourable)	9
Withdrawn (not pursued)	37
Settled (informal)	2
Application forms review	11
Total dispositions at intake	121
Formalized for investigation during period	103
Disposition at investigative stage	
Withdrawn (favourable)	9
Withdrawn (not pursued)	6
Early resolution	22
No probable cause	50
Probable cause	17
Total dispositions at investigative stage	106
Total dispositions during period	227
Complaints carried forward to next period[2]	**120**

1. This figure represents the number of files being worked on by the investigation unit at the end of March 2000.
2. This figure represents complaints carried into reporting period plus files opened during period less total dispositions during period.

Table 3
Number and Disposition of Complaints in Legal Unit in 1999-00

This table reports on complaints forwarded to the staff solicitor following a probable cause determination.

Complaints carried into reporting period[1]	43
Complaints forwarded to legal unit following probable cause determination	17
Boards of inquiry held	8
Disposition	
Withdrawn	1
Dismissed by Commission	1
Settled	8
Settled after board of inquiry directed[2]	5
Substantiated by board of inquiry[3]	1
Dismissed by board of inquiry[4]	1
Total dispositions during period	17
Complaints carried forward to next period[5]	**43**

1. This figure represents the number of files being worked on by the legal unit at the end of March 2000.
2. This figure includes complaints settled by consent order issued by a board of inquiry.
3. *Fancy et al v. Saskatoon School Division No. 13* (education/religion)
4. *James Turanich v. Saskatchewan Municipal Government* (employment/physical disability)
5. This figure represents complaints carried into the reporting period plus complaints referred to unit during reporting period, less total dispositions during period.

Table 4
Appeals and Other Court Hearings in 1999-00[1]

Appeals pending at beginning of period	3
Decisions pending at beginning of period	3
Appeals/court hearings commenced by any party during period	3
Appeals/court hearings during period	5
Decisions for commission[2]	5
Decisions against commission	1
Appeals/court hearings pending at end of period	1
Decisions pending at end of period	1

1. This table includes appeals from board of inquiry as well as hearing on jurisdictional and procedural issues.
2. *Wolf/Regier v. Fehr and Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited* (C.A.); (Q.B.); *Sjodin v. Saskatchewan Worker's Compensation Board* (C.A.) *Ryan v. Ripplinger (Collections Fine Arts Gallery)* (Q.B.); *Frechette v. Namrate Lumber Ltd. and Warman* (C.A.); *Meacher v. Mercier* (Q.B.)
3. *Strongarm v. Calyniuk Restaurants Inc.*

Table 5
Employment Equity Plans at March 31, 2000

	Employees	*Date Approved*
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission	35	January 1980
Saskatchewan Telecommunications	4,665	October 1982
Saskatchewan Government Insurance	1,624	February 1984
Information Systems Management Corporation	n/a	December 1984
The Co-operators	468	August 1985
City of Regina	2,373	February 1987
City of Saskatoon	n/a	February 1987
Government of Saskatchewan (out of scope)		June 1987
Government of Saskatchewan (SGEU)	12,916	November 1988
Government of Saskatchewan (CUPE)		July 1989
Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation	91	January 1991
Prince Albert Co-operative Health Centre	72	October 1991
Northern Lights School Division #113	n/a	December 1991
Regina Police Service	438	March 1992
University of Saskatchewan	3,910	September 1992
Saskatchewan Research Council	213	December 1992
Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	136	March 1994
SaskEnergy Incorporated	1,000	March 1994
Regina School Division No. 4	2,036	March 1994
Saskatchewan Transportation Company	246	August 1994
Saskatchewan Water Corporation	237	August 1994
Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation	20	September 1994
Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation	1,080	February 1995
SaskFor MacMillan Limited Partnership	n/a	February 1995
Crown Investments Corporation	66	March 1995
Saskatchewan Power Corporation	2,438	August 1995
Northlands College	112	September 1995
Saskatchewan Communications Network	22	February 1996
Community (Saskatoon) Health Services Association	127	June 1996
John Howard Society	36	June 1996
Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation	73	November 1996
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	516	May 1997
City of Prince Albert	n/a	May 1997
University of Regina	1,060	October 1997
Regina Women's Community Centre	8	March 1998
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation	584	January 1999
Weyerhaeuser Canada	1,145	March 1999
Law Society of Saskatchewan	20	November 1999
Total Employees	37,767	

1. This figure represents the total of all full-time, part-time and temporary employees covered by employment equity plans. The actual total is higher, because figures were not available from 5 employers.

Table 6
Education Equity Plans at March 31, 2000

K-12 School Division	Date Approved
Saskatoon Catholic	May 1987
Indian Head	June 1987
Meadow Lake	August 1987
Northern Lakes	August 1987
Saskatoon Public	August 1987
Regina Catholic	October 1987
Biggar	December 1987
Cupar	January 1988
Wadena	May 1988
Northern Lights	September 1988
Broadview	November 1988
Kamsack	January 1989
Prince Albert Catholic	February 1989
Scenic Valley	February 1998
Turtleford	June 1998
LandsWest (formerly Kerrobert and Wilkie Public)*	
North West Catholic (formerly North Battleford Catholic, Unity Catholic and Wilkie Catholic) *	
Saskatchewan Rivers (formerly Kinistino, Prince Albert Public, Prince Albert Comprehensive and Prince Albert Rural)*	
Battlefords School Division #118 (formerly North Battleford Public school Division #103 and Battleford Public School Division #58)*	
Total Students (approximate)	**71,580**

* These divisions were formed in 1997 with the merger of several school divisions, including some that already had approved education equity plans. The plans continued in effect upon merger.

Table 6
Education Equity Plans at March 31, 2000 (continued)

Post-Secondary	Date Approved
Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) Saskatchewan Urban Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP)	August 1980
Northern Teacher Education Program/Northern Professional Access Program (NORTEP/NORPAC)	September 1981
Gabriel Dumont Institute (Preparatory, Technical and University Programs)	September 1983
College of Arts and Science, University of Saskatchewan	February 1988
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST)	May 1990
College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan	January 1991
College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan	January 1993
College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, University of Saskatchewan	August 1994
College of Dentistry, University of Saskatchewan	April 1995
School of Physical Therapy, University of Saskatchewan	September 1996
Western College of Veterinary Medicine	September 1997

Table 7
Total Inquiries in 1999-00

Inquiries disposed of	3749

Table 8
Education Activities in 1999-00

Media Contacts	85
News Releases .	10
Presentations/Community Consultations	116
Displays	0
Video Loans	103

Table 9
Exemption Applications in 1999-00

Exemption Applications	17

Table 10
Capital Assets and Financial Expenditures, 1999-00

Capital Assets

	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value March 31, 1999
Office Furniture	$5,672	$1,157	$4,515
Office Equipment	$5,961	$2,384	$3,577
Computer Hardware	$62,042	$53,697	$8,345
Computer Software	$11,450	$3,817	$7,633
Total	**$85,125**	**$61,055**	**$24,070**

NOTE: The Commission has been required to record capital asset information since April 1, 1996. This report includes capital assets acquired since that date.

Financial Expenditures by Unit in 1999-00

Operations	$234,806
Complaint Processing	$723,169
Public and Special Programs	$278,270
Total	**$1,236,245**

NOTES:

1. This statement has not been audited. However, it is consistent with financial information provided to the Commission by the Department of Justice.
2. All expenditures-including salaries, services, materials, travel expenses, etc.-are allocated among the units.
3. The salaries of the Chief Commissioner/Director, Assistant Director and secretaries are allocated among all units. In addition, salaries in each unit include the following. Operations: budget coordinator and human resources coordinator. Complaint processing: intake consultants, investigator/facilitators, supervisor of investigations and senior staff solicitor. Public and special programs: education and equity advisors, communications coordinator.

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Notes

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